

Buses around Bangor

Major updates 2013

Much new information has become available, primarily on Internet, since our last review some six years ago, enabling clarification and considerable expansion of our original document. More photographs are added, mainly courtesy of Alan Murray-Rust, whose visit to the area in October 1969 was blessed with bright, sunny weather. His images are denoted (AM-R) in our text below and further illustrate the many different vehicle types and colourful liveries to be seen then. Now that over 600 vehicles are listed, the fleet details have been taken out into a separate spreadsheet accompanying this article, enabling easy sorting or filtering. All known operators in Caernarfonshire and Anglesey are covered, from around 1950 to 1970 and sometimes a little beyond. Note that *minibuses* (fewer than 15 seats) are not generally included, nor are vehicles purchased new after 1964 (the latter tend to be well recorded already, e.g. on the Internet). For a few years after 1971, very few new vehicles were purchased by operators in the area, and used-vehicle trades were somewhat reduced, due to the prevailing economic situation. The disposal dates are often approximate only; they may range from the last date on which a vehicle was known to be licensed, to the date when it was sold. In some cases, old vehicles were just left out in the depot yard or elsewhere to rot away over many years!

Recommended Reading

There has been very little material published to date on the bus and coach companies of north-west Wales. One exception is the detailed history of **Whiteway**, Waunfawr, by former employee Bill Rear published by Gwynedd Archives Service in 2001 (ISBN 0901 3378 11). **Crosville Motor Services – The First 40 years**, by Carroll & Roberts (Venture Publications 1995, ISBN 1 898432 12 0) contains a mass of detail and fleet lists for the independent operators taken over by that concern in the period 1925 – 1952 as summarized below, together with several interesting old photographs.

A very welcome new addition is “**Independent Buses in North Wales**” by Neville Mercer, in the Super Prestige series (no. 27) of Venture Publications, Glossop, in late 2012 (ISBN 978 1 90530 448 6). Approximately half the latter is devoted to Caernarfon & Anglesey (the remainder being Denbigh & Flint); although much historical and fleet detail is given in the text, together with an excellent set of photographs, only the known stage carriage service operators are covered, and there are no appended fleet summaries. Much detail of pre-war vehicles of the older established operators is given, where this is known.

The fleet lists in our spreadsheet were derived mainly from the **PSV Circle monthly newsletters**, from the start to issue 500 approx in around 1980, for the relevant Traffic Area NW (section MO after 1972), at the GMTS archive in Manchester. Certain issues were found to be missing, namely nos 421, 433, 442, 444, 450, 455, 456 and 461 in the period Feb 1975 to June 1978, sight of which may fill in a few more disposals details. Also consulted were **Buses Illustrated magazine**, from start to May 1972 inclusive, the “**Little Red Book**” editions in the period as available, and the **PSV Circle fleet list summaries** FCB2 and FCD3 for 1971 and 1987 respectively. The intermediate edition FCD2 (1978) was missing, and if anyone can provide a copy of this, both ourselves and the GMTS library would be very grateful!

Crosville Motor Services Ltd

Bus services around Bangor, Caernarvon and the surrounding rural areas of North West Wales are traditionally associated with the large BTC-group operator Crosville Motor Services. Based at Chester, this company served Liverpool and most of Cheshire as well as the whole of north and mid-Wales. However, one of the fascinating aspects of the slate-quarrying districts in the north-west was the multiplicity of small private operators which seemed to be allowed to co-exist alongside the nationalized giant. This is surprising in view of the fact that this was not “border territory” between two large group companies, as for instance at Windsor or in parts of Hereford or Shropshire, but completely surrounded by Crosville activities.

Indeed, Crosville themselves had started small, but progressed by an aggressive policy of acquisitions, in this area mainly during the 1930s. Prior to this, there were many other local operators; some of those serving Bangor which were taken over by Crosville were:-

Holyhead Motors (Mona Maroon)	November 1929	18 vehicles to Crosville
Registered office at Market Buildings, Stanley Street; 3 garages in Holyhead		
Routes: Holyhead – Amlwch (4 different routes), to Benllech, Llanerchymedd, Cemaes Bay, Trearddur Bay, Valley, South Stack, Rhosneigr.		
UNU Caernarvon & Llangefni (W. Webster “U Need Us”)	January 1930	22 vehicles ditto
Started by George E. Richards in 1927 with 5 buses & 1 coach operating from Penrallt Garage, Caernarvon & Bridge Street, Llangefni. Routes: Caernarvon – Bangor, Bangor – Holyhead, Bangor – Llangefni via Newborough & via Llandaniel, Caernarvon to Llangoed and to Newborough, Caernarvon to Birkenhead express service.		
North Wales Silver Motors Ltd, Llandudno	August 1930	27 vehicles transferred
Started in 1914; offices & depot at Mostyn Broadway.		
Routes: Llandudno to Abergele, Conway, Penmaenmawr & Betws-y-Coed		
Llangoed Red, Beaumaris	October 1930	1 vehicle
Route: Llangoed - Beaumaris		

Llandudno & Bangor Blue Motor Services (the Royal Blues) February 1931 80 vehicles
 The Coaching Office, Queen's Hotel Gardens, Clonmel Street and Imperial Buildings, Glan y Mor Road, Llandudno Junction (also depot). Also depots at Oxford Road & Queen's Road, Llandudno and Betws-y-Coed Road, Llanrwst
 Routes: Llandudno to Bangor, Colwyn Bay, Conway, Llanrwst (2 different routes) and Penmaenmawr.
 Incorporated **Bangor Blue Motors** from April 1928; with depots at Bangor, Beaumaris & Llangejni.
 Routes: Bangor to Menai Bridge, Caernarvon, Penmaenmawr, Bethesda, Betws-y-Coed, Deiniolen, Llangejni, Holyhead, Amlwch and Malltraeth Bay

Bethesda Grey Motors (the Greys), Rachub January 1932 13 vehicles to Crosville
 Proprietor: W. J. Williams. Routes Bangor to Rachub, Gerlan & Bethesda, plus a Bethesda – Birkenhead coach

J. W. Hughes, Rhiwen January 1932 No vehicles transferred
 Routes Caernarvon – Rhiwlas & Dinorwig, Bangor – Llanberis. This operator continued as **Deiniolen Motors**, with just the one route remaining, Bangor – Nant y Garth – Deiniolen – Dinorwig; see separate entry below

William Morris, Bethesda May 1934 No vehicles transferred
 Route: Bangor - Rhiwlas

New Blue Motor Bus Service (Owen), Llandudno Junction April 1935 8 vehicles transferred
 Routes: Conway – Llandudno Junction – Mochdre – Colwyn Bay, Conway - Llandudno

Mechell Maroon (Williams family) June 1935 3 vehicles to Crosville
 Route: Bangor - Cemaes

David Jones June 1936 No vehicles transferred
 Route: Llangejni - Newborough

Mrs. M. Ellis, Llanllechid (Ellis Blue Motors) February 1952 5 vehicles transferred
 Route: Llanllechid – Bethesda & Bangor

Of these, the best-known was perhaps the late-lamented Bethesda Greys, still talked about with reverence in the 1960s. These early photographs are of vehicles operated by this firm. The original prints were given to the late Iorwerth Jones of Penrhyn Castle museum in 1967 by, I think, the sons of the proprietor who had recently passed away.....



The left hand view was taken in Bethesda main street and probably shows the proprietor/s. Information kindly supplied by Neville Mercer shows that CC1749 was a 32 seat AEC YC type, new to W. Williams of Rachub in February 1920. Ownership was transferred to the partnership of R.A & W.J Williams (trading as Bethesda Greys), still of Rachub, in August 1922. The vehicle was converted to a lorry with the same owners in October 1925, and was last licensed in 1927. The picture on the right is clearly not the same vehicle (it has only around 26 seats, and the rear mudguards are different); it is seen on the approach road to Tregarth railway station, again about 1922-24.

A number of similar companies operating into Caernarvon were also taken over by Crosville in the period.....

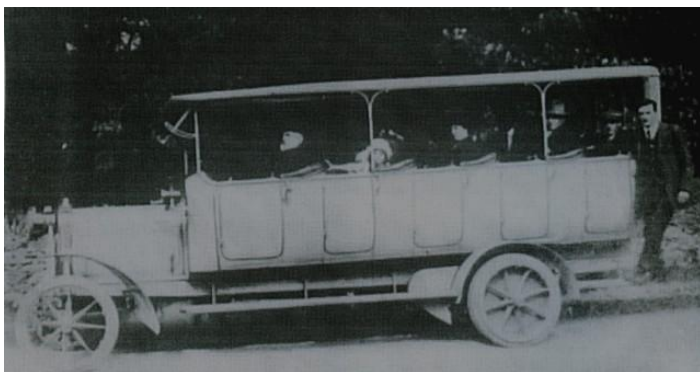
Richards (Busy Bee), Caernarvon November 1925 4 vehicles to Crosville
 Routes: from Caernarvon – Pwllheli, to Llanberis, to Dinorwig and to Portmadoc via Garn

J. Lewis Owens November 1927 no vehicles transferred
 Route: Nevin & Ederyn to Caernarvon

Peris Motors October 1928 ditto
 Route: Llanberis to Caernarvon

Thomas John Edwards Brynrefail Brynrefail to Caernarvon	October 1928	no vehicles transferred
Cynfi Motors Deiniolen to Caernarvon	July 1929	ditto
Caernarvon Bay Motors Dinas Dinlle to Caernarvon	December 1932	ditto
Seiont Motors Started by John Evans in 1912. Routes: Nebo, Nantlle, Penygroes etc area to Caernarvon	January 1934	9 vehicles to Crosville
John Hughes, Groeslon, Carmel Cilgwyn & Carmel to Caernarvon	January 1936	3 vehicles transferred
D.M. Prichard & son (D.M. Motors), Llanrug Company started in 1925, operated from a back room at Llanrug Post Office. Routes: Caernarvon – Nant Peris, to Brynrefail, to Bethesda via Bethel and to Rhiwlas. D.M. Motors continued in business afterwards as a contract and coach company; see separate entry below.	March 1936	10 vehicles ditto
W.D. Humphreys, Bethel Route: Bethel - Caernarvon	March 1936	1 vehicle ditto
E.J. Hughes, Penygroes Penygroes & Dinas Dinlle to Caernarvon	June 1936	No vehicles transferred
L.J. Roberts, Llanrug Caernarvon - Ceunant	June 1939	ditto

These are early photographs of two Caernarvon operator's vehicles, also from Iorwerth's collection.....



....and these in the **Pwllheli** area.....

Nevin Blue Motors (R.J. Harris) Nevin – Ederyn - Pwllheli	February 1934	4 vehicles to Crosville
Tudor Evans, Cream Motor Services, Llithfaen Llithfaen to Pwllheli	February 1935	2 vehicles transferred
Tocia Motor Omnibus Co. Ltd, Aberdaron Started in 1911, running Pwllheli to Aberdaron, Abersoch etc	February 1934	14 vehicles ditto
Mynytho Red Motors (D. J. Williams) Pwllheli – Llanbedrog – Mynytho	February 1934	2 vehicles ditto
William J. Jones Pwllheli – Rhiw	February 1934	no vehicles transferred
R. Roberts, Rhos Hirwaun, Pwllheli Pwllheli – Uwchmynydd & Sarn	February 1935	1 vehicle to Crosville

Crosville Motor Services opened their Bangor depot on Beach Road in 1931. By 1947 it housed 54 vehicles, reducing to 42 by 1980. The Caernarvon depot adjacent to the LMS railway station was opened a year later in 1932, home to 44 vehicles in 1947 and 25 in 1980. There were also small depots at Amlwch and Holyhead

The **Crosville routes** were consolidated and developed as follows:-

Number	Route	Year started	Crosville MS new *, or taken over from...
127	Liverpool – Caernarvon express ‘A’	1928	*
128	Liverpool – Caernarvon express ‘B’	1930	*
138	Liverpool – Pwllheli	1947	*
139	Liverpool – Amlwch	1947	*
406	Llandudno – Caernarvon	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
509	Llangefni – Newborough – Bangor	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
510	Bangor – Holyhead	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
516	Bangor – Llanddona	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
517	Bangor – Bethesda – Llanrwst	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
518	Bangor – Bethesda local	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
519	Bangor – Llanberis	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
520	Bangor – Amlwch – Cemaes Bay	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
541	Caernarvon – Bangor	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
564	Bangor Town Clock – Bangor Pier	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
565	Caernarvon – Menai Bridge	1931	Llan & Bangor Blue
521	Bangor – Gerlan	1932	Bethesda Greys
522	Bangor – Tregarth – Bethesda	1932	Bethesda Greys
523	Bangor – Mynydd Llandegai	1932	Bethesda Greys
524	Bangor – Mynydd Llandegai	1932	Bethesda Greys
525	Bangor – Rhiwlas	1934	William Morris
526	Bangor – Maesgeirchen estate	1944	*
527	Bangor – Maes Tryfan estate (circular)	1944	*
562	Bangor – Llandegfan	1938	*
558	Caernarvon – Menai Br – Newborough - Llangaffo	1930	UNU

By 1964 a new **district-based** route numbering system had been devised, and the routes serving Bangor were now as follows:-

M 7 to M 10	Llandudno – Caernarvon, via various routes in Llandudno area
N 11	Bangor – Coed Mawr (Glanadda)
N 12	Bangor – Capel Graig
N 32	Bangor – Llangefni via Penmynydd and Talwrn
N 43	Bangor – Llangefni via Newborough
N 45 to N 50	Bangor – Holyhead, various routes in Star, Gaerwen area
N 57 to N 60	Bangor – Beaumaris, then to Glanrafon, Llangoed or Llanddona
N 61, N 62	Bangor – Amlwch
N 63	Bangor – Llandegfan
N 65, N 66	Bangor – Gerlan
N 68	Bangor – Mynydd Llandegai (quarry)
N 69, N 70	Bangor – Bethesda
N 74, N 76	Bangor – Llanberis
N 75	Bangor – Llanrwst via Capel Curig and Betws-y-Coed
N 77	Bangor – Rhiwlas
N 78	Bangor – Maesgeirchen estate
N 79	Bangor – Maes Tryfan estate
P3, P4	Colwyn Bay – Bangor
X 3 – X 5	Liverpool – Caernarvon express service
X 6	Liverpool – Cemaes Bay express service

The whole North Wales Coast service was restructured from 5th September 1965, resulting in the disappearance of M7 to M10 and P3, P4. A new limited stop service L1, branded as the “Cymru Coastliner” was introduced on that date, running Chester – Caernarvon via Llandudno & Bangor. The Bangor local services continued mostly unchanged throughout the period 1966 – post 1970. At the time I arrived in Bangor in autumn 1966 the “Cymru Coastliner” and X3-X6 express services were being operated mainly by new, white-painted Bristol Lodekka double-deck coaches in the Crosville DFB number series. Their busiest time, in the winter months at least, seemed to be on Sunday evenings, when many relief journeys were run, disgorging hordes of students in Bangor returning from spending a weekend at home around Liverpool and Chester.



The left-hand image above (AM-R) is at Caernarvon Road, Glanadda near Bangor in October 1969. It is passing one of the Wessex Coaches AEC Regents, FBC 309 (see our “Contractors” section below). The right-hand view is on the old level crossing over the Llandudno branch railway, just outside Llandudno Junction station, in October 1966.

The double-deck local services to Caernarvon, Amlwch etc were also run by Lodekkas, but of the older rear-entrance bus variety (DLB) painted in the usual green livery with cream relief bands. Maesgeirchen and Maes Tryfan locals were mainly also double-deck, and saw the last of the Bristol KSW series vehicles (DKB) in use here before these too were replaced by Lodekkas. The N78 Maesgeirchen service went the long way round, and tended only to be well patronized on wet days. At other times fit and able members of the population would save a few pence by taking one of the footpath short-cuts over the intervening “Bangor Mountain” (in reality, a rather steep hill). A fully laden Bristol K with all windows thoroughly steamed up would make heavy weather of the climb up from the main A5 road into the estate on a wet, miserable day.

Single-deck Bristol MW (CMG) coaches were also used on the Cymru Coastliner services, mainly as reliefs.

I arrived just in time to see the very last of the Bristol L series half-cab vehicles running on the services to east Anglesey via Beaumaris. These were my favourite rural buses, recently then still very common in the BTC-run fleets all across Southern England, but replaced within a month or so here by the ugly Bristol SC (SSG) one-man operated vehicles already prevalent on the Bethesda group of services and most of the Beaumaris workings. This photo is of the forecourt of Bangor depot on a wet Sunday morning in late 1966 illustrates the transition period well, with a Lodekka on the N78 for Maesgeirchen, an SSG on N69 to Bethesda and an L on N57 for Glanrafon.....



And here are two examples of the L type single-deckers in preservation.....



In the autumn of 1966, when students were banned from having their own cars in Bangor, we would often dash across to the Garth Road bus stands after the finish of Saturday morning lectures at Dean Street. Services to almost everywhere interesting seemed to be timed to leave on the dot of 11am, and it was usually one of these SC single-deckers we scrambled onto breathlessly at it waited to pull out onto Deiniol Road by the Post Office. Often we did not have time to note where it was going, so had a magical mystery tour, maybe to Penmon, or perhaps the upper reaches of the slate quarries around Mynydd Llandegai or Dinorwic village – the drivers thought we were all quite mad! These SC's were incredibly noisy machines, considering that they were a relatively new design. Some months later, one of the new Bristol RE buses was tried on the Llanberis route for the first time. The roads near Deiniolen were at that time quite narrow and twisty, not being “improved” until the Dinorwic power station construction in the early 1970's. The driver questioned the sanity of his employers in putting this new 36-foot long vehicle on the route, and indeed despite his best efforts got stuck trying to get round one tricky turn. We made it eventually, but the shiny new bus was somewhat scraped!

This image (right) is outside the main Post Office on Deiniol Road, Bangor, on a very wintry 9th February 1969, with two Lodekkas making the turn into the Wellfield bus station area. I remember this day well, as I had to abandon my car on Love Lane and then walk to a job interview at the college in Dean Street. At a time when smart suits were obligatory, I turned up for this in wellington boots and with camera slung round my neck; at least I got there on time, many didn't! The other (below) is coming off the Menai suspension bridge, on an Amlwch service heading for Bangor.....



Those following are of Crosville Lodekkas in preservation.....



We start our trip around the **independent operators** in Llandudno, thence westwards via Bethesda and Deiniolen to Bangor, around Anglesey, down to Caernarfon, and thence to Pwllheli:-

Llandudno UDC Transport Dept.

The Passenger Transport Yearbook ("Little Red Book") shows that this small municipal operator had just 13 buses in 1962; our fleet list is thought to be complete for the period, and is remarkable for both the longevity of service and the number of vehicles which survive in preservation. The garage was in Builder Street. Our picture shows Dennis G type of 1929, CC8670 in early preservation days at Queen's Road, Battersea, London, heading for Brighton on the HCVC rally, May 1973.....



Llandudno & Colwyn Bay Electric Railway Company

This concern operated tramcars between the two towns from 1908 until early 1956, when severe coastal storm damage to the track caused closure and replacement by motor buses. The main depot and offices were at Rhos-on-Sea, just over the county boundary in Denbighshire, but included here since very little about the bus fleet has been recorded elsewhere.

A total of around 8 Guy Arab wartime utility double-deckers were purchased very cheaply from Southdown Motors in March 1956, together with a driver training vehicle from East Kent, strangely a Leyland Titan (picture right). The Southdown cream painted areas were retained, but the light green was covered over with just a thin coat of red gloss, which thus tended to resemble a strange and somewhat shabby orange-brown in bright sunlight! There were also two open-topped Daimlers from Newcastle Corporation transport.

The second picture (right) depicts one of the Southdown Guys outside the Rhos on Sea depot alongside the "last car" tram on changeover day.....

Three more Southdown Guys were obtained in July 1956, plus another 3 in 1958-59 (one from Southdown, two from East Kent), the latter to replace some of the earlier ones which were by now beyond further repair. The bus service was finally sold out to Crosville in May 1961, and presumably all the old vehicles went for scrap soon afterwards. The former tram depot was demolished in relatively recent years, and replaced by a block of flats



The Blue Coaches (J.R. Bithell), Oswald Road Garage, Llandudno Junction

One of my esteemed college friends persistently referred to this outfit as the "Bit Hell" coaches, which was probably totally unjustified! Started in around 1958, they ran three coaches throughout the 1960s, all second-hand and kept for around 5 years before being replaced on a rolling basis. Their livery was blue & ivory, and the concern was still trading in January 1987. The garage buildings in Oswald Road survive, but are no longer used for coaching operations.

Royal Red Coaches, The Red Garage, Llandudno

The distinctive coach station and office building in Vaughan Street still exists, nowadays as the Oriol Mostyn Gallery, as does also the former garage and workshop building in nearby Argyll Street. In 1970-71 the fleet comprised 4 Commer and 4 Bedford coaches, all with Duple bodies. This company was also still listed in early 1987. Vehicles were mainly bought new, and kept for around 9 years before usually finding eager buyers amongst the smaller rural coach operators in north-west Wales. From around 1965, the coaches were given names of the local Welsh castles, and are fondly remembered.

The Creams Coaches, Llandudno

Confusingly this fleet was owned and administered by John Williams (Red Garage) Ltd of Portmadoc, but was always based in and operated from Llandudno. The Creams coach station and local office was further along Vaughan Street, on the Oxford Road corner. All but two of the 21 vehicles we have listed were bought new, and again kept typically for 9 or 10 years. The fleet of typically 8 vehicles in our period included a venerable 1936 Leyland Tiger coach, kept until 1960 then sold on to Clynnog & Trevor Motors for another 6 years service in the Llyn peninsula!



Cox, Llandudno Junction

A small private hire coach operator, first noted in June 1963, and running a couple of second-hand Commer vehicles for around two years only.

Penmaenmawr Motor Company



Started in 1919, owned by the Dyson family after 1923 and Harold Wilde from 1935. They ran a stage service from Penmaenmawr town up to Dwygyfylchi village and the Fairy Glen tourist attraction, also coaches for private hire. The garage was at Bron Eryri, Bangor Road, Penmaenmawr. Livery (buses) maroon & cream: "The Crimson Rambler", coaches blue & silver-grey (also buses after around 1964). Ticket system: Ultimate.

The coach fleet was fairly standardized on Bedford/Duple models, the ubiquitous OB then the various generations of SB, with typically one new vehicle purchased annually for the summer season and kept for about 3 years before replacement. This picture of the 1950 Bedford OB ACC 629 is at the Manchester Museum of Transport, as preserved in the 1990s (but not in PMC livery)



The unusual and somewhat under-powered Albion Nimbus 548 NLG was maybe an ex-demonstrator, from a Cheshire dealer; it was lengthened to seat 35 passengers by PMC themselves. Despite being "officially" withdrawn from service in 1969, the vehicle was reported still at work in the area in 1973! This photo of it by Alan Murray-Rust (left) shows the later Penmaenmawr Motors livery.

Purple Motors, Bethesda

This independent company was started by Thomas John Roberts in 1914, running from Bethesda into Bangor. The “Castle Garage” and workshop was situated on the south side of the approach road to the old railway station in the centre of Bethesda but had little covered space and vehicles were often left parked in the open around the station yard. The livery was never purple, but “Ruby Red” maroon and cream in various combinations, sometimes with red relief. The company telephone was Bethesda 207, the number often being shown on the vehicle route blind to confuse the uninitiated, making them look like a big important concern with lots of routes!

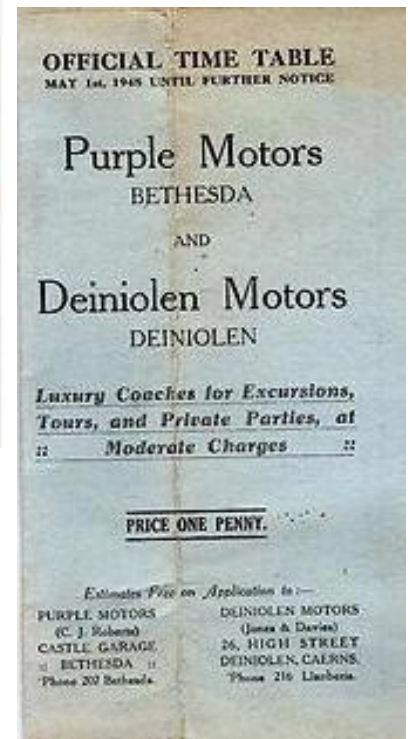


The picture (above right, circa 1933) shows JC757, a 20 seat Bedford WLB new to **Purple Motors** in 1932 and last licensed in 1948. It appears to be in the owner’s yard; the lettering along the bodyside waist rail reads “Pullman Saloon”

In 1952, then owner Mrs. Pritchard entrusted the management and day-to-day running of the fleet to Deiniolen Motors (see below), in return for which the latter company was able to use Purple’s well-equipped Bethesda workshop facilities for maintenance of its own fleet. However, the two concerns were issuing a joint timetable card as early as 1948 (right).

Additionally, vehicles were often hired by one company to the other as needed, hence some confusion as to who owned what. The fleet details in our spreadsheet are arranged according to the “official ownership” as shown on the vehicle legal lettering. It will be noted that in several cases, pairs of vehicles were bought secondhand, one going to Purple and the other to Deiniolen.

Regular Purple Motors stage carriage services were operated into Bangor via Brynbella and Tregarth, competing with Crosville by charging slightly lower fares. Schools contract services were run, and Purple was also a coach hire operator. Ticket system: Setright.



The one double-decker in the fleet, JC8427 carries the Purple fleet no 8 in early 1950s photos at Bangor Garth Road and Bethesda. Apart from No. 7 (a coach) no other vehicles are known to have carried fleet numbers after around 1952, certainly this was not the practice during the 1960s. It does however give a rough indication of the fleet size at the time it was purchased. From around 1952 to 1977 the single-decker fleet comprised 3 or 4 buses and 5 or 6 coaches, kept for typically 10 years but with large individual variations either way.

This fine selection of the single-deckers and coaches was taken by AM-R in October 1969. The first two show Purple’s then very smart Leyland PS1 bus GUE247 with Deiniolen’s almost identically-liveried GUE252 stored derelict in the background at that time





In the summer of 1971, we were looking for an old single-decker bus to restore and use as a trip vehicle for the Penrhyn Castle gang and the University Railway Society. Finding GUE 247 laid up in the yard at Bethesda (pictured below on 19th June), we agreed a price of £40 with the Purple Motors management. The gearbox was missing, reportedly having failed, but that removed previously from GUE 252 would be refurbished and supplied with our vehicle. The batteries were taken out and put on charge (at the Engineering building in Dean Street!) and the ornate saloon light fittings were dismantled for cleaning and polishing. On starting up the engine we agreed that it seemed to have a bit of a knock, but were promised all assistance and use of the Purple Motors workshop facilities to investigate this – it all seemed too good to

be true. It was, as the search for suitable storage space for the vehicle proved difficult and protracted – neither the National Trust

at Penrhyn Castle nor the College seemed keen on the idea. While all this was going on, the vandals got to work at Bethesda and when we next visited, all the saloon windows were smashed. These would have cost around £200 to replace, so we reluctantly abandoned the idea, fortunately before any money had changed hands. We were offered another redundant Purple vehicle in running order about two years later, but had to decline due to changed circumstances – I was by now living in Central London. Ironically, what remained of GUE 247 was eventually rescued for preservation by others, it is now at the Wythall museum near Birmingham (though unrestored as yet); GUE 252 was scrapped.



SVA 438 (pictured right, laying over before its next run outside the Bangor museum building) was a very strange short-wheelbase vehicle with tall body – quite disproportionate and ugly. We called it the “Buggy Bus”.

By the mid 1960’s most of the coach fleet was standard modern Bedford/Duple. We hired these several times, for instance to travel down to Portmadoc for the Festiniog Railway AGM day in April 1967.

Purple Motors continued to serve the area for a long time after the 1970s, at one time famously using an ex-London Transport DMS class double-decker, which looked enormous and ungainly in the narrow Bethesda main street. The company finally ceased to trade in 1998.



Williams Coaches, Bethesda

This was an offshoot of the better-known concern Williams of Maerdy, Merioneth, started up in 1952 in an effort to expand their business. Initially running private-hire coaches only, typically three mainly second-hand Bedford/Duples each kept for around 5 years, a market-day stage service was introduced in 1972 linking Bethesda – Capel Curig – Betws y Coed – Llanrwst,

replacing an un-remunerative Crosville working. Further bus operations, from 1973, ran from Betws y Coed via Maerdy and Corwen, to both Wrexham and Oswestry, each of these running on just one day a month! Williams ceased to trade altogether in 1981.

Eric Morris, Arvonja Garage, Awelrbyn, Llanrug

Eric Morris seems to have added private coach hire to his motor garage business from around 1958, initially with just one vehicle, then two from 1961 and up to four by 1966, continuing thus through the 70s. He retired in March 1980, and the business was then run by his daughter Rhiannon, until after 1987 at least.

Deiniolen Motors

This concern was started 1920 by J.W. Hughes & Sons as Rhiwen Motors; the name was changed by 1927. It was owned by Messrs Jones & Davies since 1947, who also took over the management of Purple Motors (above) after 1952. To the casual observer at any rate Purple and Deiniolen vehicles were thereafter virtually indistinguishable. They used the same livery, maroon and cream with red relief, and they seemed to be hired out to each other frequently. Deiniolen Motors was based at 26 High Street, a small garage and yard at the east end of the village, but often used Purple's maintenance facilities at Bethesda after 1952. Regular stage carriage services were operated from Dinorwic village into Bangor via Deiniolen, Rhiwen and Nant-y-Garth. The ticket system was Setright. Schools contract services were also run. Coach hire activities appear to have been very limited.



A photo of their sole double decker JC9795 in "Buses Illustrated" magazine, November 1966, shows it "on loan to Purple Motors", as it usually was from that year onwards, after the withdrawal of Purple's own double-decker. It was always kept looking very smart, and on one memorable occasion, 6th December 1968, worked a private hire to Beaumaris for Bangor University Student's Union, conveying officials in connection with the annual road race from there to Bangor (picture below left). The colour image (right) is in Bethesda station yard, 8th November 1967. "Buses" magazine for March 1971 records that this venerable vehicle was "sold to a group of Manchester enthusiasts for preservation"; I wonder what happened to it since?



As well as this long-serving double-decker, there were 2 single deck buses in the fleet, increased to 3 after 1966, all second-hand and kept for typically 10 years. We recorded 3 coaches, two of which were bought new and kept for around 20 years, but only two were operated at any one time.

The two pictures below by AM-R are of JC9795 in Bethesda station yard, October 1969 fresh from an overhaul and repaint, with Deiniolen's single-decker GUE252 abandoned and looking very neglected in the background.....



The two views “en route” below were taken by AM-R in October 1969.....



My picture of GUE 252 (right) was taken in the Purple Motors workshop, Bethesda, undergoing routine maintenance on 8th November 1967. It ceased to be used in early 1969.



Jones, Pontrug

Edward Wynne Jones of Plas Bach, Pontrug purchased a much-travelled 1936 vintage Leyland Tiger TS7 with Metalcraft coach body from Williams, Llithfaen in February 1967. It had started life with East Midland Motor Services, was rebodied and re-registered locally in 1949 and Jones was its fourth local owner! He is thought to have kept it, his only vehicle, for just a year or two.

Ivan W. Williams, Deiniolen

First recorded in August 1970 with one former Wallace Arnold (Leeds) Ford coach, he added two Bedfords by 1973, but seems to have sold them all by 1975.

Snowdonia Coaches (Pritchard family), Central Garage, Llanberis

Not to be confused with the well-known Pritchard of Newborough, Anglesey, nor that of D.M Motors in nearby Llanrug, the appropriately named Snowdonia Coaches had 2 vehicles after 1957, increasing to 4 by 1971, mainly secondhand Bedford/Duple, but including one new Commer Avenger with rare martin Walker bodywork. The typical Bedford SB shown in our picture was bought new in 1960 and operated until 1975.....



Roberts, Elidir Garage, Llanberis

First noted in November 1962, he operated just one private hire coach until around 1968, with (briefly) a second vehicle in 1965.

D.M. Motors, The Garage, Llanrug

Already noted as started by D.M. Pritchard in 1925 and selling his stage-carriage services to Crosville in March, 1936, he continued thereafter as a private hire coach proprietor. Subsequent owner and operator F.V Prichard ran 5 coaches after 1957, reducing to three from 1964 onwards; an interesting mixture of vehicles mainly purchased secondhand and kept for typically 7-8 years. The livery was quoted as "Blue/Grey, Red /Ivory". He is recorded as having ceased trading by October 1971.

Owen, Llanrug

He ran up to four secondhand 8-10 year old coaches from late 1971 until around 1975, probably on contract workmen's services in connection with the Dinorwic pumped-storage power station & reservoirs construction in this period.

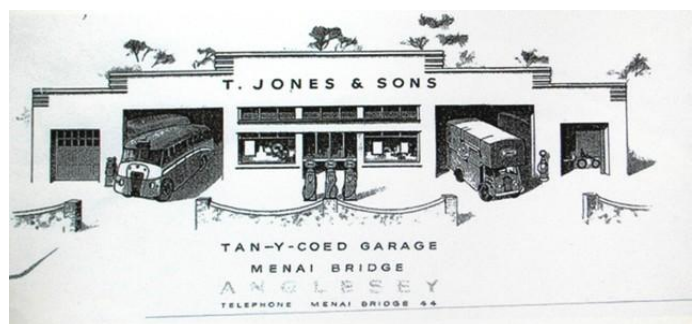
David Glyn Williams, Cilgwyn, Port Dinorwic

First noted in September 1965, running three secondhand coaches until about 1970 only

Moving across into Anglesey.....

T. Jones & Sons, Menai Bridge

This was a long-established local company, whom we also approached in 1971 when looking for a vehicle to purchase, after GUE 247 fell through. We were directed up past the garage and workshop to the "top yard" at the back of the premises where the older, more interesting vehicles were parked. We found a fairly smart Bedford OB coach which was untaxed and had a flat tyre, so assumed this was the one meant for sale – this would have been ideal for our purpose and did not seem to require much work. It seemed a real bargain at £20!



Unfortunately, the vehicle they had intended us to look at was not the Bedford, but a 1935 Thornycroft single-decker, EY 5218, which we had not even noticed the first time! It was totally derelict, with very little left of its home-made body, and buried in undergrowth. Notwithstanding our total lack of interest, the remains of this undeniably historic vehicle were eventually sold for preservation, though not yet rebuilt.

Our negotiations were conducted with a very old gentleman whom we were taken to see in the workshops, and presumed to be the owner of the firm. He must have been in his eighties and was almost blind; however he was working at a large lathe machining up a crankshaft for one of the two Bedford OBs owned. One of the younger men told us that he could still carry out this task more quickly and with greater precision than any of the other staff! In early years he thought nothing of building his own coach bodies, taking bodies off old chassis and putting them on newer ones, and including, it is said, a new coach body on a lorry chassis!

Jones' work is thought to have been solely house removals, coach hire and school contracts; they do not seem to have had any stage carriage services. The garage was at Tan-y-Coed, Dale Street, Menai Bridge. The fleet was all single-deck, painted mainly cream but with light green relief. Typically 8 vehicles were operated at any one time, many being kept for upwards of 20 years.

This picture (right) shows the Dennis Pike EY6711 parked up outside Bangor railway station in 1961 (note the carriages in top background).....



These pictures from October 1969 (AM-R) show (L-R): the Thornycroft EY5218 in apparently somewhat better shape than we found it 2 years later; the Crossley EY9194, a most peculiar looking beast and also by now in store; and the Bedford that we thought was for sale in 1971, showing the Jones livery well.....



The company is thought to have ceased operations around 1980. There is no trace of the garage premises in Menai Bridge nowadays.

Edward Pritchard & Sons, Newborough

This Pritchard started his operation in around 1919. A stage carriage service was operated from Newborough to the Anglesey county town of Llangefni, initially on market day but later daily; schools and workmen's services were also provided for. The garage and yard was at Ty'n Pant, Lon Twnti, Newborough.

Leyland Cub HL 7538 of 1936 was regularly driven by proprietor Edward Pritchard himself until 1967, when he retired at the age of 84!

Our picture (left, below) was taken in late 1966 at the Newborough yard. It is now beautifully preserved in Pritchard livery (right)....



The Pritchard fleet comprised 5 buses until 1962, reducing to three through to around 1970. There were 3 coaches after 1958, and typically 4 after 1970, all purchases after 1948 being second hand and kept for typically 15-20 years!

These pictures from AM-R's October 1969 visit show the 1945 Bedford OWB EY7786 outside the Pritchard garage, and a very smart SPT65 on school duties around the south Anglesey villages, in a quite different livery to that carried by HL 7538.....



The concern was recorded as still trading in early 1987, this being about the time that Edward Pritchard died at the age of 99, but was thought to have been wound up by his family, who had effectively managed it for many years, shortly afterwards.

Milburn Coaches, Star Garage, Gaerwen (another branch of the family had a garage and office at Benllech)

This outfit operated coach and contract workmen's services, and also seems to have functioned (unofficially?) as a dealer from time to time, buying and selling local vehicles often which remained in the "fleet" for only a matter of weeks or months. For many years an express service was operated from RAF Valley to Manchester and Liverpool and back, for personnel going on and returning from weekend leave. There was often trouble with the Traffic Commissioners, as they only had a "party booking" licence, yet collected individual fares from passengers. Also, they were only supposed to use one vehicle for this service, but often ran two, and would sometimes stop in unauthorized places to pick up and set down!



Our fleet list shows 9 different secondhand Bristol & Leyland double deckers operated from Gaerwen between 1958 and 1967, with most at work around 1961-2. There is but one single deck bus, briefly in 1965-66. The mainstream private hire coach fleet employed around 11 vehicles 1958-65; most initially were new and lasted for the whole of this period, but many of those bought after 1962 spent only a year or two with Milburn before being sold on. Only around 3 coaches were retained after 1965 and the Gaerwen operation is thought to have been disbanded altogether about 1969.

At Benllech, just one or two mainly quite elderly second-hand coaches were in use from 1958 onwards, together with one of two 1947 double-deckers owned between 1964 and about 1967. The Benllech operation was still extant in May 1974.

Ellis, Wayside, Star Crossing, Gaerwen

Just one vehicle known, a fairly new Bedford/Harrington coach purchased from Milburn's in December 1963 and run for a couple of years, possibly on a school contract?

Burrows, Llanedwen

This operator started around 1966 with one secondhand Bedford OB coach, with a Leyland Tiger Cub added in 1968; just two coaches comprised the total fleet in this small village concern until the mid-1970s. The registered office was at Pont Grug Uchaf, Llanedwen.

Ellis Bros, Church Street, Llangefni

Proprietor Frederick Brian Ellis started May 1966 running 2 or 3 coaches, also 2 or 3 double-deck buses for schools work 1968-72 but and just one thereafter. The company was still trading in early 1987.

W.E. Jones & Son, The Garage, Llanerchymedd

First noted around 1956, this private hire coach operator ran three vehicles 1958-62, but was down to just 1 by 1967. A surprise purchase was a Leyland PD2 61-seat double-decker bus in 1968, kept for just a few months! All 8 vehicles in our list were purchased second-hand.

Lewis, Bryngollan Uchaf, Llanerchymedd

One of two Lewis operations on the Isle of Anglesey, starting with one unusual double-decker, a wartime utility Daimler with Crossley body in 1963, with a second added in 1969; these were probably for schools work, and a total of 5 different deckers were owned, up to 1977. In 1972 Lewis diversified into private-hire coaching, with 2 or 3 vehicles operated until around 1980.

Lewis, The Garage, Carreglefn

Carreglefn is a small community some 4 miles north of Llanerchymedd, and the Lewis coach operator here was probably from the same family as that above. This one is also sometimes referred to as "of Rhosgoch", another small village close to Carreglefn. Three Bedford or Commer coaches were run from the early 1950s to at least 1975, all but one being second-hand and kept for an average of around 10 years.

D.H Rowlands, Red Shell Garage, Amlwch

First noted in 1956, this private hire coach operator ran a mixed bag of 2 or 3 vehicles, all bought second-hand, until around 1965. The livery was orange & blue.

Griffiths, Bodorgan

John Ifor Griffiths of Caerau Bychain, Llangristiolus started up in July 1967 with 3 coaches and one Leyland PD2 double decker, the latter presumably for schools work; all were second-hand. A fourth coach was obtained the following year, and the PD2 was replaced by a Bristol "Lodekka" from Crosville in 1972. The latter two vehicles comprised the total fleet running here until around 1977.

R. Jones & Sons, Queen's Garage, Rhosneigr

Son of the garage proprietor, Ishmael Jones and his wife ran just one coach, a rare Crossley with Windover body from 1959 to 1964, replaced by a Bedford SBG from then until 1971. Both were bought second-hand and were around 15 years old at disposal.

O.R. Jones, The Garage, Llanfaethlu near Holyhead, Anglesey

This was primarily a coach operator, with 3 vehicles to around 1960, increasing to four then to a peak of 8 from 1968-70, thereafter typically 5. The fleet livery was orange & blue, changing around 1964 to cream & green. Just one double-decker was operated, a Bristol "Lodekka" from Red & White Motors, from 1972-76.

Owen, Holyhead

A fleet of up to four double-deckers, mainly Bristol K types from Crosville, were operated throughout the 1960s, up to 1972, on local workmen's and schools duties. The coaching activity comprised typically 3 vehicles, from 1956 onwards, again apparently finishing around 1972.

Mini Tours and Welshways of Menai Bridge

Mini Tours was started around December 1966, with a registered office at Moranedd, St George's Road, Menai Bridge. However the vehicles were parked in the open in the former Menai Bridge railway station goods yard, just by the Caernarvonshire side of the suspension bridge. The old goods shed was used for maintenance and repainting of the fleet, which was all obtained second-hand. The trading name Welshways appears to have been adopted by late 1971, though the vehicles still showed Mini Tours in the legal lettering. The official change of name is recorded as from September 1972.

They had a Leyland half-cab single decker CWG204 in excellent order which we thus coveted as our third choice for a vehicle to preserve.....

The Alexander fleet number plate was still carried above the offside headlight, though painted over. The owner said he would like to sell it as he was engaged on schools contracts and had to use two men on this vehicle, whereas he wanted to cut this to only one to save costs. Unfortunately, whilst undoubtedly merited by the condition of the bus, the price of £250 asked was way beyond our means. So we finally gave up this idea once and for all! We never saw this vehicle again – it does not appear to be preserved, though similar Alexander examples are.

The two other vehicles in the background to my photograph (right) of CWG 204 taken in March 1972 are DHD208 and ORM139. It will be noted that the name Welshways was prominently displayed, but the legal lettering just behind the passenger step reads “Mini Tours.....” The bus livery was mainly off-white, with dark blue relief.



In the background of this photo taken on 31st January 1972 (from the special DMU train run to commemorate re-opening of the rebuilt Britannia Bridge over the Menai Strait), as well as CWG204 in the background, parked by the old goods shed are the ex Royal Blue coach OTT36 and former airside vehicle FYF252C new to BOAC at London Airport (Heathrow), still with its flashing orange beacon on the roof at front, but repainted by Welshways in light blue and white.....



Very little seems to have been recorded about this fleet or its workings. From just four vehicles in early 1971 (2 coaches, one single deck bus and 1 double decker), the coach fleet was expanded rapidly to around 10-12 units running 1972-76, all second-hand purchases and already fairly old, and kept for only around 2-3 years each. There were 3 double deckers in use by 1972, again finishing around 1976.

Independent Companies serving Caernarvon

Caernarvon town square was a real mecca for old independent buses even as late as the 1970s. At least four companies worked regular stage-carriage routes from the outlying villages, and they all congregated here. At busy times, relief buses were run to shift the crowds, particularly on Market days and on Saturday evenings when the pubs and cinemas closed.....



Whiteways (O.R. Williams & Sons, The White Garage, Waunfawr)

Motor bus operation was started here in 1911 by Owen Robert Williams, and developed as Carnarvon, Waunfawr & District Motor Services; the familiar name “Whiteway” was adopted during the 1930s. The company had a garage and workshop in the centre of Waunfawr village, and worked stage services from Beddgelert and Ceunant past there heading for the county town. The unusual ticket system used was Willebrew. The vehicles were painted completely in unrelieved white, unusual and eye-catching but tending to look somewhat grubby most of the time, and even occasionally showing up rust streaks! The company was still trading in early 1987.

Unlike most of the North Wales independents until very recently, this one has been thoroughly documented by an ex-employee, Bill Rear, the subject of a two-part article in Classic Bus magazine during 2001 and then an excellent booklet with many photographs and a full fleet list published in 2002

I managed somehow not to take any photographs at all of Whiteway vehicles during the whole eleven years I was living in the area! Here are some taken by AM-R in 1967 and 1969.....



The coach fleet normally comprised 7 or 8 vehicles at any one time, with many of the Bedfords purchased in the first few post-war years being kept in service for an extraordinary length of time, often latterly running as service buses. There were two double-deckers in everyday stage service, replaced in the early 1960s, with the last acquisition running until 1979, by which time it was 33 years old! These were supplemented by 3 or 4 single deck buses, with 2 early light 12/14 seaters working to Dinas Dinlle over the weight-restricted swing bridge over the entrance to the town quays on the River Seiont.

Express Motors, Rhostryfan

This company started operations as early as 1908, by Owen William Owen; it was owned by Robert Hughes Jones after 1947. He ran his red and cream liveried single-deckers from Caesarea Square via Fron, Rhostryfan and Rhosgadfan down to Caernarvon centre, a distance of 9 miles, in competition with Silver Star (below) and (partly) with Crosville. See the note in "Buses Illustrated" issue of November 1963; at that time the fleet comprised 3 buses (AHE and the 2 JJJ's) and 3 coaches. The coaches were painted pink and green, changed in around 1967 to pale green relieved by darker green. The garage and yard was at Tyddyn Canol, Rhostryfan. Ticket system: Bell Punch. The stage carriage service was sold to Silver Star (below) in October 1970, together with 3 buses as detailed in our spreadsheet. R. Hughes Jones sold the remaining coaching business to another set of Jones's in September 1977, operating from nearby Rhosgadfan. Ironically the stage carriage service was recently acquired back from Silver Star, and continues to this day!



I photographed HG9649 and JJJ96 at Caernarvon town square on 15th June 1967.....

(the third vehicle, on the left, is Clynnog & Trevor Motor Services RC9699 on their long run down to Pwllheli)

AM-R's two photos (below) are in and around Caernarvon Square in October 1969, that on the right being AJC41 in the revised coach livery.....





Our fleet list shows typically 5 or 6 single-deck buses in service post-war, all after 1948 being purchased second-hand and kept for around 7 years each; after 1965 there were only 3 or 4 needed. As far as is known, no double-deckers were ever owned. In the 1950s there were 4 or 5 coaches, again reduced to 3 after 1962, continuing thus beyond the loss of the stage services, into the 1970s and beyond.

Silver Star Motor Services

This operation was started by John Ifor Jones in 1918; and owned by Edward William Thomas of Bryn Awel, Upper Llandwrog after 1949. Post-war, the buses were painted two shades of blue, with cream relief, and operated another stage route from Caesarea to Caernarvon, via Bontnewydd. Ticket system: Bell Punch. Express Motors' stage service and 3 of their vehicles were purchased in October 1970. The company continues in business as a coach holiday and summer heritage service operator.



Here are two of the dreaded noisy and underpowered (but very economical) Bristol SC types, 606JPU in the Town Square, Caernarvon in June 1971 (left) and AM-R's photo of 9574F terminating in October 1969 (right).....



Here is the ex-Devon General (Grey Cars) coach XTA848, still in Grey Cars livery but devoid of any ownership lettering in October 1969, at a refreshment stop along the A55 North Wales coast road at Bodelwyddan (photo: AM-R), he recorded it as being in the ownership of Ellis, Llangefni, but the PSV circle register shows it as still being with Silver Star in early 1971. Details are not known of the similarly-liveried coach behind it.....



Our spreadsheet shows typically 3 or 4 single-deck buses and 3 or 4 coaches operating at any one time, supplemented by the trio of buses from Express Motors in late 1970. Again, all vehicles were purchased second-hand after 1950 and kept for around seven years each, by which time the buses at least were often 20 or more years old.

Castell Motors

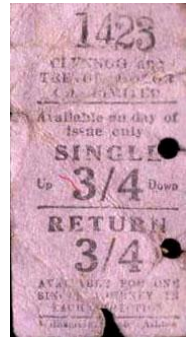
Only one known vehicle, Bedford coach AJC41 owned by C.P. Jones of Castell Caeronwy, Upper Llandwrog (started December 1970); this is thought to have mainly functioned as the Betws Garmon – Caernarvon school bus. It was always parked up outside the small church at Betws Garmon at weekends. Livery was two shades of Blue. The vehicle was previously with Express Motors (qv)



Clynnog & Trevor Motor Services Limited

This was a publically-owned company started in 1912. In the 1960s their livery was red and cream; the main stage carriage route operated was Caernarvon to Pwllheli, in tandem and in competition with Crosville's N82 service. The extensive garage premises and offices were (and still are) at Trevor. Ticket system: Setright. During the period 1950s–1970s Clynnog & Trevor ran a fleet of around 10-15 buses and coaches at any one time, virtually all second-hand, and including some double-decker buses. They were kept for typically 6 years before replacement, though some lasted much longer, especially the immediate post-war intake.

The company continues in business to this day, with many local shareholders.



Ifan Jones Parry, Llithfaen

First noted in around 1958, Parry was a private hire coach operator from this small village astride the north Lleyon coastal road leading down to Nefyn. He operated typically 4-7 coaches, all bought second hand and often already quite elderly; they were kept for an average of around 3 years each and replaced regularly.

Williams, Red Garage, Llithfaen

Started 1925 by M.H. Williams and owned by Mrs. Eleanor Williams (his widow) of Delfryn, Llithfaen after 1962, running a stage service from Llithfaen into Pwllheli. Becoming familiarly known as Llithfaen Motors in later years, the livery was chocolate brown & cream, later maroon & cream. Ticket system: Bell Punch. The operation continued to 1987 and beyond.

There was just one service bus, replaced in 1959 and 1970, all purchases being second-hand. In addition 2 or 3 coaches were normally available for private hire, and supplementing the bus when needed. One of the coaches, a Bedford/Duple bought from Purple Motors when five years old, continued to serve at Llithfaen for no less than 24 years!

Caelloi Motors, Pwllheli

This concern was started by Thomas Hughes Jones in 1923 and still owned by him into the 1970s; the name Caelloi is that of the family farmstead near Dinas village. Stage carriage routes were operated from Pwllheli to Dinas via Rhosddu & Brynmawr, and via Llaniestyn & Garn. The main garage, workshop and office premises were at West End, Pwllheli, part of which was formerly a horse-tramcar depot, and there was a small outstation garage at Dinas. The post-war livery was red & white, changed after around 1965 to a very unusual pink & white scheme. The ticket system was Bellgraphic. The company continues as a coach hire and holiday operator to this day.

Our fleet list shows just one single-deck bus in use at any one time, up to around 1969 when a second was added; there was also a "Lodekka" double deck vehicle in use from 1975-78. Private hire, excursion and contract coaching formed the backbone of operations, also helping out on the stage services when the bus was unavailable. Around 3 coaches were owned to around 1958, thence gradually increasing to 8 by 1965 then a jump to 10-12 through to 1971 and beyond. All these were bought second-hand at around 10 years old on average, and kept for between 2 and 10 years, typically around 4 years.

The two pictures below from around 1971 (by kind permission of Ross Pattinson) show the distinctive livery of Caelloi vehicles, unmistakable out in the Lleyon countryside! Note the differing body styles of Leyland Tiger Cubs DCN 853 & 861. The other vehicle in the left hand picture is AEC Reliance NCB915.....



Jones, Morfa Garage, Morfa Nevin

Glyn Merion Jones of Gwynfa, Morfa Nevin started up his private-hire business in 1966 with one Bedford SB coach, expanding to three vehicles by 1971, by which time they were trading as Jones Brothers. All the coaches were bought second-hand at about 12 years old, and kept for typically 4 years.

Alwyn Evans, Pwllheli & Llanengan

Another small private-hire coach operator, first noted around 1957 with one coach, and owning a total of 8 in the years up to 1968; 2 bought new and the rest second hand, kept for typically 3 years each.

Contractors

FBC 311 AEC Regent 3 Brush new 1949
photographed in late 1966.....

This vehicle carries a Bethesda destination blind and appears to be in Purple Motors livery (this is a late afternoon photo directly into the sun and thought to be on the open public parking ground near Dean Street in Bangor, courtesy of Richard Brown)

The fleet number carried is that of its previous incarnation as Leicester Corporation Transport no. 45, and co-incidentally their livery was the same, so it was in fact still in Leicester condition.

Parked near to it was an ex-Crosville Bristol L single decker, still in Crosville green livery, and carrying the contractor's name "Pochin" in large white letters on the side panels.



It is recorded that similar Leicester vehicles FBC301, 304 were owned by **Wessex Coaches, Bristol**, and were working on Anglesey around August 1964 on loan to Taylor Woodrow (photo in Buses Illustrated Feb 1965 issue). By January 1967, there were 24 others in the series FBC 298 – 322 working as staff buses for the Wylfa Power Station construction project, so it is one of these that we saw. They also had a variety of other double-deck buses and some coaches, a total of some 42 vehicles in early 1967 as listed in our spreadsheet. As the contract was run down, the only ones left by mid-1968 were most of the ex-Leicester Regents, and by autumn 1969 only about 13 of them. They finally finished shortly afterwards.

AM-R photographed a well-loaded, Pen-y-Groes bound FBC322 (below) in Caernarfon, and 309 parked up for the evening on the Caernarfon Road at Glanadda, Bangor in October 1969 (right). By now both had been repainted into Wessex Coaches' rather uninspiring all-over dark blue livery.....





GCD 40 (below) This Leyland TD7 DD ex Southdown was recorded by AM-R as Johnston Ltd fleet no. C34 at Penybryn Road, Bangor in October 1969. It appears to be serving as a mobile office/staff messing/ stores, possibly in conjunction with highway improvement/widening works on Beach Road nearby at that time.



SHN 737 (left) Another vehicle photographed by AM-R during the same visit, this was a Bristol LS, ECW B45F ex United Automobile BU47. It was apparently with Howard, Glasgow (contractors) around that time. The indicator blind reads Bangor-Llanberis



Penrhyn Slate Quarries Limited, Bethesda are recorded as running **GRC127**, a 1955 Leyland Tiger Cub bus bought from Trent Motor Traction, from 1967 to around 1973 as staff transport

Atomic Power Constructors, Trawsfynydd nuclear power station works

Although based in Merioneth, these staff buses were frequently seen in Caernarvonshire, and were employed in conveying workers from all over north-west Wales. It is recorded that APC bought 10 old Crossville double-deckers in October 1959, another 9 plus 3 single-deckers in October 1960, 8 more in 1961 and another 15 in October 1962, a total fleet of 45 vehicles, although some of the later ones were as replacements for those that fell by the wayside on these arduous duties. Some of the double deckers had originated as wartime utility buses with London Transport. Most vehicles carried APC fleet numbers in the range 2 to 52, and the known details are shown in our spreadsheet for the record. The power station started generating in late 1965 and most of the buses were disposed of soon afterwards, but a few were retained for staff duties until around 1968; we saw some of these at the time of our college Engineering Society visit to the Trawsfynydd Nuclear Power Station in 1967.

K. A. Jagers April 2002 *updated 2006-7; major revisions Mar-April 2013*